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EAT MORE TURKEY

by

DAVID W. EVANS

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ONE THING IS CERTAIN. There would be the title of the 1970's Turkey. It would be particularly applicable to the 1970's when the National Turkey Federation's first "Eat More Turkey" campaign.

As an industry with nearly a century of history, the poultry industry has a long and proud history. In 1970, the National Turkey Federation's first "Eat More Turkey" campaign.

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As a chapter in his autobiography, David W. Evans wrote this chapter covering more than 50 years observing and working with the poultry industry. Written from carefully-kept files this history is not only factual, but contains many important insights concerning the turkey industry.



## EAT MORE TURKEY

One thing leads to another. That could be the title of my life's history. It could be particularly applicable to my involvement in 1945 with the National Turkey Federation's first "Eat More Turkey" campaign.

As my readers will recall, my first poultry client was Utah Poultry Producers Cooperative Association beginning in 1923. That assignment came to the ad agency for which I was then working, through my lifetime friendship with Clyde C. Edmonds, one of the three founders of that pioneer poultry co-op. Seven years later, in 1930, Clyde Edmonds and Salt Lake City attorney Frank Evans, a man who, though not a relative, played godfather to me through a number of important years of my life, gave me a chance to serve a new type of agricultural marketing cooperative, the first of its kind in America, Northwestern Turkey Growers Association.

Frank Evans was one of America's pioneers and best legal authorities on cooperative agricultural marketing. He and his wife, Priscilla, also a lawyer, had been working on legal documents for more than a year and a half prior to my involvement, on a new legal concept that would permit independent local and regional cooperative poultry pools to consolidate in regional co-op for the marketing of turkeys for their members. If approved at a meeting scheduled to be held at an early date in Salt Lake City, that new organization would be launched as

Northwestern Turkey Growers Association. Its members would include marketing pools from the states of Washington, Oregon, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Nevada and several other mountain and plains states. Its headquarters would be in Salt Lake City.

The ad agency for which I worked (Stevens & Wallis) was also in the printing business. Its contribution to the new venture would be the printing, without cost, of the proposed articles of incorporation and by-laws, also some business stationery--a small gamble which they were only too happy to accept.

As expected, the venture was approved and commenced business on March 6, 1930. Edmonds became its first president and general manager and Herbert Beyers, a young man from Oregon, manager of the Oregon Turkey Growers, moved to Salt Lake City and became its first assistant general manager.

After that, it became my first responsibility to "sell" Beyers, who would run the office, on Stevens & Wallis and Dave Evans, as suppliers for the new company's printing needs and what little advertising it could afford to do, which, for several years, was almost none except for the designing of its trademark. But the connection did establish me and the advertising agency as pioneers in the field of cooperative turkey advertising and marketing.

Some nine years later I learned of a proposed meeting to be held in St. Louis for the formation of a national turkey industry association and I attended that meeting but not as an official representative of Northwestern Turkey Growers Association or any other group but strictly on my own. In fact, my presence



there was hardly noticed and there were no plans contemplated at that time for advertising turkeys through National Turkey Federation which was then established, and virtually no hopes by me that there would be one in the foreseeable future.

Six more years passed during which Norbest Turkeys, then the corporate and trade name of the original "Northwestern Turkey Growers Association," became one of the nation's largest turkey marketing organizations and Herb Beyers became one of the nation's leading marketing authorities. It was June, 1945, also, that World War II had come to a sudden close in Europe and American servicemen were fast being mustered out of service and the purchase of food for the armed forces was being severely curtailed. Contracts for the purchase of millions of large tom turkeys which were being produced for the armed forces were being canceled. The turkey industry, after experiencing several years of good times, was now facing a crisis. It was not only the cancellation of those government contracts which threatened the industry, it was the fact also that the industry during the war years had gone all out to breed and produce a new and larger type of turkey which, for the peace-time market was just too big for the shrinking American family; too big for our roasting pans; too big for our modern home-size ovens; too big for single family meals; too big for family budgets; and far too big for the Thanksgiving/Christmas market which was a full five or six months away. Now that the war was ending who would eat those big, broad-breasted birds, especially the "toms" which were being grown for the military, or were already in storage in freezer warehouses?

To illustrate the size of the problem, here are some comparisons between prewar and wartime production and consumption of turkeys.

In 1937, three years before the outbreak of World War II, the total production of turkeys in the nation was 375,828,000 pounds. With the coming of the war and the emphasis on production of food generally and economical meat in particular, the annual production of turkeys advanced steadily to 516,527,000 pounds in 1941, 525,899,000 pounds in 1942, and 768,957,000 pounds by 1945. As long as the war lasted, growers had little to worry about because the government bought most of their crop. Almost a year before the end of the war, however, signs of trouble ahead could be foreseen. The amount of turkeys which were held in reserve in commercial freezers had increased from 36,000,000 pounds in December 1943 to 73,000,000 pounds in 1944, 108,000,000 pounds a year later and by January of 1946 would greatly exceed that. The plight of the turkey grower would have continued to worsen, even if the war had not come to a sudden halt.

Another problem which faced the turkey industry in 1945 and immediately thereafter was the disparity between the prices of tom turkeys and hen turkeys. Traditionally throughout the year they had sold at approximately the same price per pound, but with the loss of a large portion of the military market, big tom turkeys would soon sell for 18¢ per pound less than hen turkeys. That price spread alone could cost the turkey industry some sixty to seventy million dollars a year.



It was under those conditions, real and potential, that the board of the National Turkey Federation was meeting in Chicago that 1945 summer. The only immediate solution open to the turkey industry seemed to be the launching of a national "Eat More Turkey" campaign. And that was the decision 'the board' was prepared to authorize, but first, it must engage an advertising agency. Several Chicago advertising agencies were offered the job, but declined the offer because of the limited amount of finances available--a mere \$5,000 for an all-out national effort!

At that point, Herb Beyers told the board that he knew a Salt Lake City advertising man who might tackle the job. The board approved and Beyers phoned me to come to Chicago immediately while the board recessed for my arrival. After a brief discussion, I was offered the job but my first inclination was to turn it down, then I thought: "Here's an industry that I know something about. I've already attended one of their conventions at my own expense, so why not give it a try! Nothing ventured, nothing gained." So I accepted the assignment.

And then I discovered that the Sherman Hotel, where the meetings were being held, had already made some studies on the comparative portion costs of turkeys, chickens and other meats. The results showed that turkey was a better buy than chicken on a cost-per-serving basis even when the whole bird cost of turkey meat was 10¢ a pound greater than the cost of chicken. On the basis of that study, the Sherman had begun using more turkey and



less chicken in its salads, sandwiches and fricassee dishes. All of that information was turned over to us by the manager of the Sherman Hotel who also agreed to give us a signed statement to that effect.

About the same time, another volunteer ally came to our assistance. Charles Loeffel, a Chicago-based vice president and advertising director of Ahren's Publications, publishers of several hotel and restaurant trade journals, who had been on leave of absence while serving as a food procurement officer for the U.S. Navy, had just been mustered out and was available for help. He was thoroughly knowledgeable in the field of institutional food promotion and was seeking new challenges. He saw in an advertising campaign for turkey, one of those challenges. I also recognized in Loeffel a great asset and with his assistance we planned our campaign around national hotel and restaurant magazines.

Up to that time trade magazines were being used principally for company name identification. Most of the advertisements which were appearing in these trade journals were considered as mere goodwill gestures. There were few hard-hitting merchandising campaigns then being carried. Since we needed immediate action and could not afford to use any other media we had no choice but to make the strongest possible direct appeal to the hotel and restaurant trade to serve more turkey and less of other poultry. Our strategy was to "shoot the works" in a one time

insertion of a double page two-color ad to tell the story that turkey meat cost less to serve than chicken. It was a daring strategy because some of our turkey producers were also chicken growers and would resent down-grading chicken, but we had no choice if we were to make \$5,000 do a job for us. The ad also would carry a coupon offering a folder with comparative portion cost data of chicken meat and turkey meat. To help illustrate the contrast between the higher yield of turkey than chicken we ran, side by side, two photographs: one, of a broad-breasted tom turkey and two, a typical roasting chicken. The caption read: "Says Emile of the Sherman: 'Turkey costs less to serve.'" The inside copy said in part: "At the Sherman in Chicago, turkey is king. There, consumption of turkey increased 500% between 1939 and 1942, and 900% between 1939 and 1945. The reasons are two: It pays the Sherman to serve more turkey and Sherman patrons like it.

"Carefully kept records reveal some interesting facts, all favorable to turkey. Take turkey versus chicken, for example:

"Turkey outsells fowl since the Sherman began to push turkey in the ratio of four to one.

"The yield of finished meat on a broad-breast tom turkey is 34%; the yield on fowl is 20 to 22-1/2%.

"While the cost of fowl per pound is 30% less than turkey, the 'yield' on turkey is 70% greater.

"A turkey is prime when twenty-six to thirty-two weeks old; its meat is young and tender. Fowl is decidedly over a



year old when eaten, so therefore the meat is not so tender and juicy.

"Because boneless turkey meat actually costs 23% less than boneless chicken, a great many progressive restaurants are using turkey meat to replace chicken in dishes for all slicing and dicing purposes where poultry meat is required.

"Fowl produces slightly less than 50% of white meat. Turkey produces approximately two-thirds of white meat, and only one-third of dark meat.

"The dark meat in the fowl is small in size as compared with the dark meat in turkey, and consequently does not lend itself to long generous slices of large appetizing flakes, as does the turkey."

The pamphlet carried other facts such as:

"Turkey yields more edible meat, costs less per pound (net), requires less labor. ...Turkeys are not what they used to be. The new meat-type turkeys are bigger, yield more breast, have larger, fatter drumsticks. The percentage of finished meat of the whole bird increased almost 50% over the previously grown birds. Large turkeys are "produced" for hotels, restaurants, hospitals, clubs, school cafeterias and all other institutions and eating places. Moreover, modern refrigeration makes turkeys available the year around."

On the back page of the folder we printed five favorite tested recipes used by the Sherman Hotel.

Other data supplied by the Sherman Hotel which we used in various ways included these additional facts:

"Roast turkey sold on a \$3 dinner costs 43¢."

"A sirloin steak served on a \$3.50 dinner costs 56¢."

"One-half broiled or fried chicken on a \$3.00 dinner costs 45¢."

"Lamb chops served on a \$3.00 dinner costs 60¢."

"Rib roast served on a \$3.00 dinner costs 40¢."

"Turkey costs 46¢ per pound, fowl 35-1/2¢ per pound."

"The yield from a broad-breasted bird is 34%. The yield on a fowl is 20% to 22.5%. The broad-breasted tom turkey ranges from 28 to 32 weeks old. The fowl is decidedly over a year old, and therefore inferior in quality to turkey."

"The finished meat on turkey averages \$1.35 per pound; finished meat on fowl averages \$1.75 per pound (finished sirloin averages \$1.12 per pound)."

Coupons and letters requesting copies of the leaflet came in by the hundreds and from all parts of the nation. They came mostly from hotels and restaurants, lunch counters, catering firms and industrial plant cafeteria operators.

Response to the first ad was so great that the industry immediately voted an additional \$40,000 to carry on during the next eighteen months.

Results of the first year's "Eat More Turkey" campaign were estimated to save the turkey growers thirty million dollars. This came principally by holding down to approximately ten cents a pound the spread between the big toms and hens instead of twice that margin which could reasonably have been expected without the campaign. Even that budget was pitifully small to support a national campaign for a \$220,000,000 industry. Described in a printed brochure for mailing to members of the National Turkey



Federation and to leaders of allied industries such as processors, feed producers, hatcheries, etc., as we predicted in 1946 "The turkey industry has had a million dollar campaign for a few thousand dollars...and industry leaders are now convinced that the turkey people almost unanimously favor putting this "Eat More Turkey" campaign on a permanent and enlarged basis... So, commencing next fall (1947), a check-off plan will be adopted. Under this program processors in each state where there are public dressing plants will collect from growers who approve the program, donations on the basis of 1¢ a bird for all birds that go to these plants. By this means at least one hundred thousand dollars a year should become available; and in all states the present invitational program will continue, as there are many turkey growers who market their birds direct and do their own dressing."

After that, at each annual mid-winter convention of the turkey federation, turkey producing states would vie with one another to announce their commitments for the coming year.

In addition to the direct advertising we did we cooperated with the Poultry and Egg National Board which was the publicity and research arm of the poultry and egg industry. Through our own efforts we also received much publicity from the hotel and restaurant trade papers, not only those on our advertising schedule but others as well, because turkey talk suddenly had become important food trade news.

A very special type of collaborators were the dozens of

famous chefs who unselfishly shared with us their favorite recipes and cooking methods, and some of them even their yield-cost data. Many of these chefs posed for pictures and gave us their testimonials on the economy of serving turkey meat, and often shared their kitchens with us in developing new methods of cookery. None of them charged us for their services.

While it is obviously impossible to remember all the good people who gave so generously of their time and talents in those days, I quote here from a page of acknowledgments from our first "Turkey Handbook," the names of persons who deserve special mention: Ernest L. Byfield, president, and J.A. Jones, general manager, Hotel Sherman, Chicago; Harold S. Stile, manager, Carder's Restaurant, Chicago; Paul Simmons, manager, Rudolph Thoma, chef, and Fred Harris, Mayfair Hotel, Los Angeles; Martin J. Harding, vice president and Miss Beatrice Hughes, general manager, Harding Restaurants, Chicago; Miss Alberta M. Macfarlane, education director, National Restaurant Association, Chicago; Mrs. Mary P. Huddleson, former editor, Journal of the American Dietetic Association, New Canaan, Conn.; J. Knight Willy, editor and J. Franklin Nelson, feature editor, Hotel Monthly, Chicago; Charles F. Loeffel and Walter O. Voegele, of Restaurant Management and Hotel Management, Chicago and New York; James V. Malone, editor, and Mrs. Leonore D. Freeman, home economics consultant, American Restaurant Magazine, Chicago; Dr. O.F. Ball, president, The Modern Hospital Publishing Company, Chicago; Miss Alice Easton, author of "Turkey Purchase, Preparation and Service,"



Boston, Massachusetts; Miss Eleanor Howe, editor, "What's New in Home Economics," Chicago; Miss Dorothy E. Shank, Director, Counseling Service, Harvey and Howe, Inc., Chicago; Miss Margery Trott, cafeteria manager, Wayne University, Detroit; Miss Winning Pendergast, assistant director, Department of School Lunch Rooms, Detroit, Michigan; Chef Marcel Gillet, Palmer House, Chicago; Chef Henry Wagner, Stevens Hotel, Chicago; Chef Dominick Giannino, Volney Hotel, New York City; Chef Ivan Blom, El Chico, New York City; Chef Max Keller, Town House, Los Angeles; Chef Charles Jewell, Hotel Ft. Des Moines, Des Moines, Iowa; Mr. Homer Huntington, general manager, and Mrs. Kathryn Bele Niles, home economics director, Poultry and Egg National Board, Chicago; and Miss Mildred Bowers, graduate student, Cornell University, Ithaca, New York.

By January 1, 1949, freezer holdings of turkeys (mostly big toms) had dropped from 117,000,000 pounds on December 1, 1946, to 47,000,000 pounds on January 1, 1949. That was the lowest hold-over inventory since 1943 and the industry was enjoying the highest priced turkey market in its history. But, true to human nature, when things are going well it is human nature to relax one's efforts, and turkey growers proved to be no exception to the rule. With its available funds all spent, the executive committee virtually abandoned advertising. Then came the fall-- and what a fall! Turkey prices took a nose dive to the lowest

level in ten years. Even more significant was the fact that the tom-hen price spread had continued to widen. One week before Thanksgiving in 1949 that spread had reached its widest margin-- 17-1/2 cents a pound.

It was at this point that I was again called back to Chicago to meet with the industry leaders. With those facts at hand and a crusader's zeal I was permitted to make a statement just about the time the industry leaders had decided to abandon advertising totally. I have since been told that my impassioned appeal on that occasion literally saved the "Eat More Turkey" campaign from complete abandonment.

During the last three months of 1949, we resumed advertising on a small scale and the year for a whole showed a gain of 4/10 of a pound per capita consumption over the preceding year, and by 1950 the campaign was back in full force and consumption had increased 20% and continued to increase steadily each year thereafter for the next twenty years or more with only one or two minor exceptions. In resuming a full-scale advertising program in 1950, we again ran double-page spreads in such magazines as American Restaurant, Restaurant Management, Hotel and Restaurant Operator, Hotel Monthly, Hospitals, Modern Hospital, What's New in Home Economics. Many of those ads featured not only the economy of serving turkey but introduced many new practical menu recipes with turkey meat as the principal ingredient. We also added trade magazines serving super markets, wholesale food distributors, chain grocery stores, independent food retailers, frozen food locker centers. Helping meat merchants sell more turkeys at a profit not only



at Thanksgiving and Christmas time but year around had become a fundamental part of our campaign by 1950.

To do that, we initiated a number of seasonal promotions beginning with "Easter Time is Turkey Time." That promotion proved to be very effective. Since then, Easter has become the third best turkey day of the entire year--next only to Thanksgiving and Christmas.

Our next seasonal promotion was for increased mid-summer sales--"Midsummer Turkey Time." That promotion helped us get rid of some of the big carryover inventory from the previous year's production.

Our next promotion proved to be effective both for the increased sales it produced but also because it led us to a study of practical methods of separating whole turkeys into salable parts and the beginning of a campaign which, after a quarter of a century, now finds turkey parts, both in uncooked and "further processed" form, in many thousands of food markets across the nation.

Just how that campaign started is a story in itself. It began in a small Salt Lake City food store which also operated a frozen food locker department (in days when home freezers were not nearly so common as now). The appeal was to sell to a housewife a quarter of beef, a whole lamb or one or more large tom turkeys; have them cut into meal size portions, wrap the parts, label them in separate packages and put them into one of the store's freezer lockers which could be rented by the month or the year like renting a safe deposit box in a bank.

Managing that Salt Lake City market was an ex-U.S. Navy chef who was also a butcher. Clay Robinson of the Evans Agency first became acquainted with C.J. Clement--Clem for short. Clem was a wizard with the butcher knife and in a matter of three to five minutes he could cut up a twenty or twenty-five pound tom turkey into twenty meal-size portions. Just to watch him with his knife--nothing more was needed--was a crowd-pleaser, as we soon found out. Some months later, we employed Clem for that very purpose, sending him to food shows and for other promotions. Around this idea we developed a separate campaign which we promoted under the slogan, "Turkey is Going to Pieces," backed by a booklet describing and illustrating Clem's "eight easy steps for cutting up turkey into wings, drumsticks, breasts, thighs, boneless ribs, steaks and filets." We also suggested cutting turkeys into halves and quarters by the very simple method of running them through a bandsaw. Some retail butchers reported that they were able to realize profits as high as thirty percent by cutting up and selling turkey parts--a much higher profit percentage than selling of whole birds.

The actual volume of business created by our initial cut-up turkey promotion was quite small in terms of actual sales but a quarter of a century later many millions of pounds of "further processed" turkey, (ready or almost ready to serve) today accounts for some 50% of the total turkey crop and, in the opinion of some authorities, is just barely getting started."



Even in those first experimental days food markets were saying to us: "People like turkey but they don't want to invest \$6 or \$8 for a whole bird. (Costs are much higher today!) They like to buy it in smaller pieces--like beef or pork."

The story about the introduction of cut-up turkey merchandising really began, as I recall, in the late forties and would not be complete without another story, which also involved Clem and me.

In my wide travels to turkey industry meetings and food shows and my personal visits with chefs and other food experts, I planned to stop in Omaha to talk turkey with the management of the Swanson Poultry Company. At that time the Swanson firm was a relatively small meat and poultry packing house. I had learned from the trade, that they had recently made a substantial investment in a turkey specialty project which had not proved profitable and were therefore quite pessimistic about turkeys. But I decided to visit them to get their story first hand and also to tell them about ours and Clem's work with cut-up turkey. At first Gill Swanson, the partner with whom I talked, expressed negative interest but after I offered to give them Clem's services for a couple of weeks at absolutely no cost or obligation he accepted my offer. To save traveling expenses and to make sure Clem made the right start with Swansons, I drove him all the way from Salt Lake City and delivered him bodily to the Swanson plant in Omaha. There as I told Gil Swanson, they could pick his brains while he was picking turkey meat off the bones and everything that they could learn together would belong exclusively to Swanson's--no obligations, no sharing of secrets, no salaries,

no living expenses, no costs of any kind. NTF would pay all of Clem's costs.

Just what they learned in that period I never learned; perhaps nothing. But some months later on the other hand, something happened to Swansons and to cooked turkey that was very important to the industry which led us to believe that, just possibly that venture with Clem may have produced one of the most important contributions to further processed turkey merchandising we had so far made.

At least this is true: It was not long after Clem's work at the Swanson plant that they introduced the very first of that Swanson family of ready-to-heat-and-eat TV dinners which were soon to capture the imagination and the market of millions of American household consumers. And this, the very first of those Swanson specialties was its TV Turkey Dinners. Further, while we were never able to prove--nor did we try--that the work Clem did at Swansons was either directly or indirectly responsible in the slightest degree for the subsequent purchase of the Swanson Company by Campbell Soup for a reputed price of ten million dollars, the circumstantial evidence to that effect seems substantial. And finally, there is positively no doubt that the Swanson TV Turkey Dinners used millions of pounds of turkey annually. In one month, for example, it was reported that a Swanson California plant used one million pounds of turkey meat for its TV Dinners.

It is also true that, as an acknowledgment of the primary role I had played as a pioneer in the introduction and promotion of cut-up turkey, beginning several years earlier, National



Turkey Federation at its 1952 annual convention, "knighted" me, partly in fun with the title: "Sir David Cut-Up" and with that title I received a handsome set of steel carving cutlery with handles shaped like turkey heads--a picture prop which has been used in our turkey promotions many times since.

For his work with cut-up turkey merchandising, "Clem" Clements also received wide personal acclaim. We used him extensively as a demonstrator and pictures of him appeared widely in advertisements and in trade publication feature stories. In the January 1951 issue of the FOOD DEPARTMENT of Hotel Monthly Magazine an eight page, illustrated editorial featured Clem and cut-up turkey, also menu clip-ons of thirty profit making turkey dishes which had been collected from leading chefs of the country. Many thousands of those menu clip-ons were purchased by restaurants throughout the country.

Also in the late forties and early fifties, other new further processed products were coming on the market. One of those was boneless turkey roll which its sponsors named "Tur-King." At the time, I believed with others that the product had real possibilities but the ever present difficulties of introducing an entirely new product with inadequate promotional funds resulted in its early demise but not the end of the basic idea of a boneless frozen turkey especially for the institutional trade where precise portion control is so important.

Meantime Clay Robinson of the Evans Agency discovered a restaurant operator who was successfully using a unique method of cooking deboned turkey roasts in less time and with bigger and better meal portion yields and larger profits to the restaurant.

Herman Leis, owner and operator of the restaurant was a jovial, fast talking, personable cook with a slight German accent. He was a tremendous showman so I engaged him to demonstrate his deboning and roasting methods at the next annual convention of the National Restaurant Association in Chicago and after that at many other food shows. His work with some of the leading hotel and restaurant chefs in major midwestern and eastern cities caused a number of them to spontaneously declare: "I'll never roast a whole turkey again"--and that became the theme of a series of advertisements which we ran in leading national hotel and restaurant magazines with supporting sales literature and effective publicity.

Another important development of those early years was the continual improvement of turkey processing methods. In 1953, for example, consumers nationally were able to get for the first time on a mass basis, fully eviscerated oven-ready turkeys. That achievement was called by some "the greatest revolution in the turkey industry" since the development of the broad-breasted meat type turkeys of a decade or so earlier and it was a big boost to our "Eat More Turkey" campaign--no feet and head to cut off, no viscera to draw, no pin feathers to remove. The housewives loved it.

In April of 1953, National Turkey Federation and the Evans Agency received one of America's most coveted "Oscars" for advertising. The competition for that high honor was sponsored by Associated Business Publications, the blue ribbon organization whose membership included most of the leading trade publications in America. Our prize was a "First Award" for the most effective



use of advertising in merchandising publications during 1952. The presentation of duplicate awards to NTF and to the Evans Agency was made at ABP's Annual Convention banquet which was held at the Roosevelt Hotel in New York City on April 6, 1953. Present with me to receive the awards was Chester Housh, of Elkton, Virginia, a vice president of National Turkey Federation. In making the award, W.K. Beard, president of Associated Business Publications Board of Directors stated:

"This 'Eat More Turkey' campaign is one of the finest advertising and promotional jobs we have ever seen.

It has done a tremendous job in getting the American public to eat turkey at every holiday, every day and almost for every meal...This program, engineered by Dave Evans, has been adopted as a model for advertising and promotion by some of the leading colleges in the country. It is a program that is well appreciated by the National Turkey Federation."

The following Saturday, April 11, on the editorial page of the Salt Lake Deseret News-Telegram, its editors commented:

"While Mr. Evans and his associates deserve heartiest congratulations for winning out over the mammoth eastern advertising organizations in this competition, even more public attention ought to be given to what their winning campaign actually accomplished for an American industry.

"Some years ago, the turkey industry was in trouble. Costs were high and sales were low. Few people dreamed of eating turkey other than at Thanksgiving and Christmas

time. The industry could have gone to Washington and said: 'Look, we need help. We aren't selling enough turkeys. Many of us are losing money. The government is simply going to have to buy our turkeys to keep us in business.'

"But it didn't. The industry went instead to an outstanding advertising agency and said in effect, 'We need help. Show us how to sell turkey.'

"The 'Eat More Turkey' campaign that followed is what won the award this week. In the past several years, the nation's turkey eating habits have been revolutionized. The housewife now thinks nothing of buying a drumstick or two for an evening meal. Turkey steaks can be found on thousands of dinner tables. Cut-up, frozen turkeys are in countless home freezers.

Meantime, percentage-wise, American red meat consumption has declined in varying degrees from 38.5% for lamb to 7.2% for beef and veal.

"All this is by way of illustration of what we suppose Secretary of Agriculture Benson means when he proposes that farm groups must do a better job of solving their own problems. Farm problems are complex and there is no simple 'cure-all.' Government no doubt will find it cannot entirely abandon its farm programs.

"But it is certainly clear that meat producers, dairymen and other such groups have not done as much research as they ought to do into new methods of



marketing and merchandising. One suspects that foreign markets have not been adequately explored. The kind of aggressive selling that the Idaho potato on restaurant menus from coast to coast might perform more wonders if applied to some of these other fields than any of us can imagine.

"An agricultural economy built on sound principles and reliance, with the government standing ready with 'disaster insurance,' is infinitely safer, from the farmer's point of view, than the support and control economy we have known up to this point.

"Just compare the one hundred and fifty million pounds of government-purchased surplus butter stashed away in cold storage lockers with the millions of pounds of succulent turkey now gracing American dinner tables across the country. Compare the dairy industry trouble with the turkey industry fat and free.

"The campaign has not only reached the public effectively, but also has done a tremendous job in selling turkey to the institutions of America--hospitals, schools, prisons, etc., as well as to the restaurant business.

"This program, engineered by David Evans, has been adopted as a model for advertising and promotion by some of the leading colleges of the country. It is a program that is well appreciated by the National Turkey Federation."

Recognition back home was also given to Herbert Beyers, Chairman of the Marketing Committee of the turkey industry, and to W.T. Geurts, President of the National Turkey Federation during the season in which the campaign ran.

After receiving the award I was asked to make a brief response. Among my comments were these:

"For quite a few years we have served one of the nation's large turkey accounts, so a small starting budget of a few thousand dollars was turned over to us by the National Turkey Federation. From then on it has been largely a matter of just sawing wood, as it were. At the outset we confined our activities largely to the institutional field, but later expanded to use some business magazines in the distributive field.

"To achieve the degree of success that this account has enjoyed, we have had to buy closely, and supplement paid advertising with a lot of imagination, public relations and free publicity.

"If I have any one bit of advice to give that seems more important than any other, it is this: 'Don't be tempted to cover more territory than can be effectively covered with the budget at your disposal. It is far better to confine your activities to a single facet of the market than to dissipate your funds and dilute your efforts by pursuing objectives beyond your scope.

"As an example: 'We have been approached many times to spend a little money here or a little money there



to cultivate the general household consumer market. However, knowing our budget was not large enough for that purpose, we have limited our activities to the market we could afford to influence effectively."

Another accomplishment of 1953 was the completion of a revised version of "Turkey Handbook." Replacing a first edition which had been compiled and published several years earlier, the new edition would contain in classified, comprehensive form virtually everything then known about turkey and its preparation, yield, costs, cooking methods and uses. It was beautifully illustrated with hundreds of illustrations in full color.

In an acknowledgment printed on the table of contents page, M.C. (Maggie) Small, Executive Secretary of National Turkey Federation, said:

"Like its predecessor, the enlarged turkey handbook has been made possible by the active cooperation and generous assistance of scores of firms and organizations and individuals who have given freely of their time, experience and knowledge to bring these facts to you. Obviously, it is impossible to name all of those who have helped. These include operators, managers, chefs and food control people of hotels, restaurants, lunch counters, hospitals, school lunch rooms and in-plant cafeterias coast to coast. They include food editors and research staffs of the institutional magazines. Also they include personnel of the United States Department of Agriculture and directors and

staff members of various interested industry and trade associations. They also include turkey processors and purveyors, professional searchers and many, many others. The editors of "Turkey Handbook" have graciously given credit to countless contributors and cooperators. As executive secretary of NTF, I now add my own word of appreciation to all these, with special thanks to 'the editors.' These are the folks at Evans Agency, who, since 1945, have directed 'Eat More Turkey' advertising and promotional activities. In a very large sense, this is their book, theirs in concept, research, copy, photography, art and production. Signed: M.C. Small, Executive Secretary."

Despite the fact that my own reputation as a turkey marketing authority had been well established, I instinctively felt a sense of inferiority when meeting at conventions and elsewhere with successful turkey growers. So, in the spring of 1953, I decided to take a small venture in the turkey growing business.

Just outside of the city limits of Salt Lake City, on an old farm which was being only partially cultivated (at Redwood Road and Twenty-first South) my son Bob's brother-in-law, Hal Sharp, was living with his widowed mother and a new bride. I offered to put up the cash and take the financial risks of trying my luck in the turkey growing business. We began with 1,500 poults and funds for the paying of hourly wages to my partners, and for the purchase and construction of coops, brooders' sheds and feed with a three-way split in the profits, if any at the end of the year's



operations.

For two seasons we persisted in that operation but in the end proved that it took brains and experience and some good luck to succeed in raising turkeys. One hazard which we had not counted on was our location--our turkeys could be both seen and heard from a main highway just across a low wire fence. As our birds neared maturity and Thanksgiving approached dozens of birds took French leave into the hands of pedestrians and automobile drivers. Another deterrent to success which we had not fully counted on was the high incidence of disease which took the lives of many of our birds and impeded the growth of others.

As I have recently reviewed receipts for bills which we incurred in that short-lived venture, I am embarrassed at the high cost I had to pay for that experience. But while it lasted I felt more at home with our turkey-growing clients as I was able to wear my turkey producer hat as well as my advertising badge and merchandising know-how which I was certainly more entitled to wear. But that experience also gave me more respect and admiration for the abilities and courage it took to be a commercial turkey producer.

Also from those experiences and from my close acquaintance with literally hundreds of turkey growers throughout the country I learned this about turkey growers: Almost invariably the successful ones were a special breed of farmers who had long since learned that growing turkeys is a hazardous business, and part of that was due to the high susceptibility of turkeys to disease.

Fortunately, for those who stayed with it, much of those hazards have since been minimized or eliminated through the development of new remedies and preventatives. But the risks every turkey grower must always take is the inherent wide fluctuations of the market from year to year and the long investment he must make for expensive equipment, poults, feed, etc., to average his earnings when things go well with the industries. I am told that the total cost of bringing to maturity a crop of a hundred thousand birds, even in those days would run into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. And some turkey producers are responsible for a million birds or more.

In the year 1954, turkey sales continued to increase. The November-December 1954 market movement exceeded that of the previous five-year average by forty-one million pounds. Off season sales throughout 1954 were also at an all-time high, so both holiday and everyday turkey sales were bigger than ever before. And the year after that turkey consumption was still rising steadily. Official government statistics reported that per capita turkey consumption in the United States had risen 115% between 1939 and 1955.

Thousands of letters were still being received from hotels and restaurants and other mass food serving institutions, also from super markets, chain stores, independent food retailers, from every section of the country, also from Canada, Mexico, and many foreign countries. That newly awakened interest stimulated many magazines and newspapers to write feature articles about that distinctive American bird and about the new burgeoning turkey industry.



Among those articles were several which recalled the fact that Benjamin Franklin, way back in the days of the American Revolution had suggested that the all-American turkey, instead of the eagle should have been our national bird. Writing from France on January 26, 1784, to his daughter, Franklin is quoted as having said:

"For my part, I wish the bald eagle had not been chosen as the representative of our country; he is a bird of bad moral character; he does not get his living honestly; you may have seen him perched on some dead tree, too lazy to fish for himself, he watches the labor of the fishing hawk; and when that diligent bird had at length taken a fish, and is bearing it to his nest for the support of his mate and young ones, the bald eagle pursues him, and takes it from him...besides he is a rank coward; the little king bird, not bigger than a sparrow, attacks him boldly and drives him out of the district."

And to this Franklin added:

"The turkey is in comparison a much more respectable bird and, with all, a truly original native of America... He is, besides though a little vain and silly it is true, but not the worst emblem for that, a bird of courage and would not hesitate to attack a grenadier of the British Guards, who should presume to invade his farm yard with a red coat on."

In April of 1955, National Turkey Federation and the Evans Agency again received one of the prize winning awards for our "Eat More Turkey" campaign. Unable to be present on that occasion for the presentation ceremonies in New York City I was represented by Herbert Beyers, Chairman of the National Turkey Federation Marketing Committee. Chester Housh, then president of the National Turkey Federation, again represented the client. Commenting on this award a newspaper account said, "Of the seven top awards, the award to the Evans firm was the only one to go to an advertising agency west of Chicago. Many of the nation's largest firms competed in the contest. The award was based on an entire campaign and not a single advertisement or group of ads. The turkey campaign was described as 'an effective related series with an excellent approach to the subject: specific in its presentation, with an excellent slogan, a good idea simply and directly told and illustrated.'"

Also in 1955, NTF and the Evans Agency initiated some nutritional and production cost studies at Cornell University. Those studies extended into 1956 and beyond. They were done under the direction of Dr. M.L. Scott. They quite definitely established the fact that turkey as a source of animal protein, meets all of the requirements of the nation's highest nutritional standards and that a turkey is also one of the most efficient of all meat producing animals yielding more meat per pound of feed than almost any other animal. On the other hand, these studies indicated that turkey meat is rated lower in fat, higher in riboflavin and niacin



and the lowest in cholesterol of all popular meats; further that the fat in turkey is of the soft or unsaturated type, the kind that reportedly does not increase a person's blood cholesterol level.

Those studies also compared the yields of the total edible portions of raw and roasted turkeys of various types, weights, sexes, and ages with other meats and concluded that turkey meat was the most economical and most nutritious of all meats compared.

The details of the studies were very informative and significant but only the bare conclusions reported will be given here for lack of space. Among these principles as later reported by Dr. Scott in the Journal of American Dietetic Association (and as widely publicized in spiraled general publications and at food conventions and seminars), "A turkey sandwich containing four ounces of meat will provide more than 50% of the daily protein allowances for men, women and teenage girls and approximately 48% of the allowances for teenage boys. The report also indicated that the high nutritional standards of turkey meat make it ideal for those combating over-weight.

Dr. Scott also noted that:

"Turkey meets the needs for the hospital patient who is not restricted to a special diet and is of excellent nutritional value to the growing boy and girl in the school lunch program, and to elderly people who's need for calories diminishes with advancing years. Also, that 'our present high standard of living goes hand in hand with the increased per capita consumption of lean, high quality animal proteins and turkey heads the list of lean meats in protein and low fat content.'"



Dr. Herbert Pollack, secretary, Committee on Therapeutic Nutrition, National Research Council, Mount Sinai Hospital, New York, also declared: "...Proteins play a very important part in human nutrition as they do in animal nutrition. Proteins in the body control osmotic pressure which influences the water balance or fluid content of the circulating blood. If inadequate proteins are consumed, the circulating proteins decrease and the animal or human develops what is know as starvation edema, or a form of dropsy... Proteins are the functional unit for the immune responses of the body. The body's ability to fight disease, the body's ability to develop immune bodies in the circulating blood are dependent on adequate protein metabolism."

Dr. Pollack's remark is only one of many from authorities who recognize the importance of protein in the human diet. And with this growing recognition of protein in the diet, turkey should continue to play a greater role in everyday eating as well as for Thanksgiving and Christmas festivities.

Another accomplishment of that same period was the development of the small Beltsville white turkey, named for the poultry research center in Beltsville, Maryland, where much of the development work took place. I was fortunate in knowing and having for a friend, Dr. Marsden, who directed the research. From 1950 to 1952, as reported, production of those lightweight birds tripled but by 1955 their production began to decline and that, we believed, was because the use of parts of larger turkeys was increasing--and large birds were more economical to produce on a pound-for-pound basis than Beltsville.

The 1955 convention of the National Turkey Federation was held in Atlantic City, New Jersey. My attendance there was my first and last visit to that once famous convention city with its long boardwalks and numerous amusement attractions.



Another event of that year was a visit Bea and I made to Europe--mostly for sightseeing but while there I did learn wherever we went what I could about turkey growing, processing, and marketing. Among the things I learned was that the price of turkeys in Europe was prohibitive to most consumer pocket books and that those few favored turkey growers, especially in Great Britain, who under government subsidies and protected by economic quotas, were able to make unconscionable profits on home produced birds. Several years later I would have an opportunity to help modify that situation.

By 1955 the results of our domestic "Eat More Turkey" campaign was continuing to mount. The fact that turkey consumption between 1939 and 1955 in the United States had risen 115 percent, was most encouraging, but many growers were beginning to ask how much further we could go before glutting the market. In other words, was there a ceiling on turkey consumption in the United States?

On March 16, 1956, I was asked to speak to that question at the annual conference of the Pacific Poultry and Dairy Association in San Francisco. From a prepared text I answered as best I could:

"Yes, there is a ceiling and no, we have by no means reached that ceiling, nor will we reach it for many years to come." To quote further from that text:

"Broadly speaking, we have two ways of increasing the consumption (1) by increasing its per capita consumption, (2) by getting our share of the total food gains which result from population increases.

"Let's examine these phases separately. First: how

much can we increase the per capita consumption of turkey?

"What has been done in the past 15 or 20 years is something of a guide for the future. Since pre-World War II days, per capita turkey consumption has increased from 2.1 pounds to approximately 5 pounds, ready-to-cook basis. This has been done in two ways:

(1) by putting turkey on the menus of the restaurants, hospitals, and school cafeterias, year-round; (2) by putting turkey in the food stores of the nation "out of season."

"Turkey represents less than 2.5% of the total of red meats, poultry and fish. It ranks next to the bottom of the list among those items. So, you see, there is almost unlimited room for expansion.

"What of the future? People, like rabbits, don't add; they multiply. Future gains, if present trends continue, will be at a much, much faster rate than in the past. The U.S. Census Bureau's forecasts for the next two or three decades stagger the imagination. One of the accelerating factors is a steadily rising standard of living. As standards of living improve, the birth rate seems to go up. People have greater confidence in the future. Conversely, the fear born of depressions that parents of newborn children will not have the means to rear and educate them properly, with security to themselves, lowers the birth rate.



"There are other factors at work to increase population: the advancement of medical science, better nutrition, better sanitation--factors which tend to prolong human life. Future advances and discoveries in these fields seem likely to further promote population gains. More babies will be born and old folks will live longer to consume more food. Average life expectancy in America is now 69.8 years. In 1879-89 average life expectancy was 34 years.

"As a result of these and other factors, it is now officially estimated there will be 221 million by 1975 and 251 million by 1982--95 million more Americans eating up turkeys and other foods than there are today. At our present rate of approximately five pounds per capita, this will make a market for an additional half a billion more pounds (dressed weight) of turkeys than are produced today.

"America today is talking about food surpluses. Let's face the facts: twice in the lifetime of most people of this generation (World War I and World War II) America has had serious food shortages. It could happen again--with or without war. A single serious drought or a series of them could shift the scales from surplus to scarcity.

"Every seven seconds of every hour of the day a new baby is born--three million people a year. During

the 10 minutes I have been talking, 85 new American consumers have joined the ranks and have created a demand for more than five million pounds of food during their lifetime. Demographers (those are the people who make statistical studies of populations, as to births, marriages, mortality, health, etc.) said our population would level off during the 1950's and would decline after 1960.

Less than 10 years ago, experts were saying that by 1975 we would reach 162 million people. We have already exceeded that figure by four million.

"There are other factors pointing to expanding markets for turkeys. Twenty years ago 5% of our population were over 65; now 8% are over 65. By 1960, 9% will be; by 1975, 10-1/2 to 11%. Old people eat less calories and more proteins. The high protein turkey will help to meet this demand. Not only that, but the medical profession seems to be discovering that too much fat in our diet predisposes people to heart troubles. Turkey being one of the best meats in low fat content should also find favor as this fact is better understood.

"Another factor which will increase the market for turkeys is the expanding of export trade. Turkey is virtually an unknown commodity in many of the countries with whom we have normal trade. Efforts are being made to expand our export market.



"Another factor which will increase the demand for turkey and other high quality protein food: continued prosperity. Money is required to buy good diets. Increases in income among the lower income groups mean increases in food purchases, especially meat. Even in this best fed of all nations there is still under-consumption of quality foods. Part of this is due to economics and part to education.

"Several other factors will help to promote the increased consumption of turkey. One is the universal availability of turkey in convenient forms.

Progress in producing meal-sized portions of turkey has been somewhat discouraging, but the present outlook is by no means hopeless. Proof that a potential demand exists is seen in the ready acceptance of the fryer-roaster turkey during the past several years. Portions of large turkeys must also be made available to the public. When packers and processors generally treat turkey parts like they do other meats and poultry, and back them with a proper promotional push, turkey consumption could double almost overnight.

"Still another factor which spells future growth for turkeys is the fact that the turkey is one of the most efficient of all meat-yielding animals--nothing is superior to it. With high protein for diet and high efficiency for production and the widespread public acceptance of the product itself for

both holiday and everyday use, I can see nothing but a bright future for the turkey industry for the long range. What we do from year to year to keep demand and supply in balance is largely a matter of promotion. That's up to us. I devoutly hope we do our best.

"But I must quit. Another five minutes have passed. Another 42 babies have been born. And another potential lifetime market of 2-1/2 million pounds of food--some of which will be turkey--has come into existence."

My predictions also included a claim that the per capita consumption of turkeys would also increase substantially during that twenty year period ahead.

On both counts I was conservative. Per capita turkey consumption during that period did increase from five pounds in 1955 to ten pounds in 1978 and population at the end of 1978 is up by 51 million persons, as I now review those predictions, and total tonnage of turkeys consumed has increased from 52 million pounds in 1955 to 2,101,000,000 pounds in 1978, and turkeys still represent but 3.8 percent of the total red meat, poultry and fish which Americans consume today.

In another speech which I made on March 27 to the California Turkey Federation in Turlock, I repeated some of the same facts and added that advertising would play an even greater part in changing the lifestyles, living standards, kinds of foods people would eat or not eat, and the merchandising forms that would



prevail in the next two decades even more than it had in the past. And those predictions also proved to be true.

In 1956, we were continuing to concentrate our major efforts in business publication advertising to stimulate year-round use of turkey as a healthful, economical, popular food for home and restaurant, school lunchroom, hospital service and other mass feeding institutions.

We also played up the new findings of nutritional experts at Cornell University of turkey's important place in the diet. Our media schedule included two-color spreads and single-page insertions in 17 merchandising, institutional and professional publications. The results of the campaign were again excellent. Turkey consumption for that year was 125-150 million pounds greater than in 1955, or a gain for turkey nearly 20 percent greater than for any other poultry or red meat.

Again our business paper campaign brought in many thousands of inquiries--2,000 in the first ninety days of the year, we were able to report. To have attempted to do the job through general consumer media or by other methods with our limited budget, then a mere \$150,000, would have been impossible. And so we said, over and over again.

In the next couple of years, turkey consumption continued to grow until it had reached 6.5 pounds per capita by the end of 1957, or an increase of 28 percent in just two years.

The January, 1958, issue of Progressive Grocer Magazine, carried an illustrated article captioned "Wrigley Merchandises Cut-up Turkeys to Boost Off-season Sales." The article began,

"Do you have any turkeys left over from the holidays?

If you do, the answer, says Wrigley store officials, is cut-up turkeys.

"Cut-up turkey merchandising plays two important roles in the meat department to some one hundred Wrigley supermarkets in Michigan. It is a means of cleaning out carry over whole turkeys and it is also profitable merchandising.

"Turkey parts have much eye appeal to the housewife and make an excellent outlet for turkey sales during the off season."

In January, 1958, as I was preparing to leave for the annual meeting of the Executive Committee of the National Turkey Federation in St. Louis, I was stricken with a severe heart attack and was held in the hospital for a period of two weeks. Well do I recall my anxiety as I lay under an oxygen tent pondering what to do about the Evans Agency's annual presentation to the Executive Committee. Overcoming some protest by my physician I summoned Clay Robinson, one of the senior account executives of the agency, to my hospital room. There I dictated to him many pages of instructions and information which I had intended to carry myself to the conference. Reports that I received from all hands later satisfied me that he had handled this assignment well and successfully; and from that time on I divided a portion of the load I had been carrying pretty much alone with Clay Robinson and Richard Marshall, another account executive for the advertising firm. But I always kept my hands in the



account until my retirement as an active account executive late in the 1960s.

By September, 1958, turkey consumption for the first time since we started serving NTF, leveled off at less than six pounds per capita. Also, in September turkeys in storage were the highest ever for that date: 161 million pounds compared with 149 million pounds for the same date the year earlier and the storage holdings continued to climb until they reached 255 million pounds by November first. It was not that we were doing less for the industry than usual but it was just one of those things--an adjustment period, we assumed, and we were right because the Thanksgiving-Christmas market was very good and by February 1, 1959, freezer holdings had been reduced to 160 million pounds compared with 179 million on February 1, 1958, and a 139 million-pounds average for that date.

The 1959 National Turkey Federation convention was held for the second time at Des Moines. One of the largest attendance of record was recorded, thirty-four hundred. Peter Crafts was president. Clay Robinson represented the Evans Agency at the Des Moines meetings. Encouraged by the large attendance, we put renewed emphasis on seasonal turkey promotions: "Easter Time is Turkey Time"; "Turkey for Mother's Day"; "Midsummer Turkey Time"; "Turkey for Weddings and Anniversaries."

A New June Promotion:

Also that year, Quarter Turkey Roasts were proving popular in market tests in California. They were advertising "about \$2 will get you a meal-size turkey roast for a family."



The following year (1960), a new edition of "Turkey Handbook" was hot off the press. Arza Adams of American Fork, Utah, was the new president of NTF. At the NTF Convention, he reported on the successful operation of a newly-passed turkey marketing order in Utah and California.

From the October 1959 Turkeygram, an official publication of National Turkey Federation, the following facts and figures reflected results of our "Eat More Turkey" program up to that time:

"Consumption is up 150%; production is up 46 million birds; and turkey is being sold in greater varieties the year around than ever before...Within a few years...restaurants and hotels that had used turkey only for Thanksgiving, Christmas, were featuring it on their daily menus...The consumption of turkey doubled and, today (1959) it is a rare restaurant or hotel that doesn't feature turkey on its menu year round.

"...The per capita consumption of turkey rose from 2.7 pounds in 1944 (a year before the "Eat More Turkey" campaign started) to nearly 7 pounds today (1959) and large tom turkeys led the profit parade, mainly because the institutional restaurant field had been sold on using these large birds."

During that period, the Institute of American Poultry Industries was receiving federal funds under Public Law No. 480 to promote the sale of American-produced poultry products abroad. As a result, between 1954-56, exports of U.S. turkeys to Europe had increased from 46,000 pounds per year to 934,000 pounds. Immediately after that, however, they suffered a set back, dropping to 131,000 pounds in 1957 but were up again in 1958 to nearly 2,000,000 pounds.



As a part of that foreign promotion program, I was assigned by the American Poultry Industries and National Turkey Federation to make a study of the sales potential of American turkeys in Europe. I left in May, 1960, taking Bea with me as a self-paying travel companion. My own expenses and a small per diem were paid for out of government funds.

Just prior to my trip, American turkey exports to Europe for the first four months of 1960 were up over this same period in 1959, 177 percent for a total of 5.3 million pounds. Most of those exports were for Holland and West Germany. None were permitted in Switzerland or France and no commercial turkey sales had been made in Italy at that time although there had been some turkey displays and demonstrations at Italian trade shows and food fairs.

My first stop during that 1960 trip was Rotterdam. There I conferred with officials of the USDA Foreign Agricultural Service and their counterparts in the Netherlands government. After four weeks of studying the food markets in West Germany, the Netherlands, Switzerland and Italy, I reported that prospects for exporting American turkeys to West Germany and the Netherlands were encouraging, but less favorable in other continental areas. I also noted that government embargoes on all American poultry, except for some cooked-canned specialties in Great Britain, prevented the import of all turkey products.

I also observed that American turkeys had little competition anywhere in free continental Europe except from Iron Curtain countries such as Poland, Yugoslavia and Hungary; also that the

quality of "Iron Curtain" turkeys was definitely inferior to the American product in form, finish, color, processing, and packaging, although similar but inferior products from the Iron Curtain countries were generally priced lower than the American product.

Contrary to my preconceived notions, most of our turkey promotions and most of our sales in Western Europe were for the family market. Christmas sales of turkeys in West Germany and Holland had increased rapidly as a replacement for the traditional European holiday goose. I attributed it in part to the fact that young European women, especially those in West Germany, like our girls in America, were trying to stay slim because that was the style. Unlike the traditional fat holiday goose of continental Europe, turkey was low in fat and high in protein.

I also discovered that, in the short period of eight months prior to my 1960 visit to Europe, turkey parts had become very popular and some retail food stores were offering them daily. I saw them in quite a number of the larger supermarkets. Generally speaking, those Europeans preferred the dark meat portions not only because dark meat was more juicy and flavorful but that it was cheaper than white meat.

Although the American turkey industry at the time was generally quite supportive of the "Eat More Turkey" campaign, it was politically and economically divided on the subject of a proposed federal turkey marketing order. In May, 1962, an article supporting the marketing order appeared in Turkey World. It was sponsored by Kentucky Turkey Growers and said in part:



"It appears to us there are two groups fighting marketing orders. First, are the people who conscientiously believe that 'things will work out' and we shouldn't be 'running to Washington.' While we feel such convictions are antiquated in this new era of advanced technology, finance and mass production, we respect their courageous expressions and open effort to defeat marketing orders.

"The second opponent type is unlikely to be an exclusive grower. Neither is he usually vocal, but always influential. The larger the crop, the more he profits, he waxes fat regardless of over-production and disastrous turkey prices. We call him a Fat Cat.

"Neither group should have fought our inherent right to vote on the issue. But, some of both did."

When the marketing order was voted on in national referendum in 1962, it was defeated.

During those years, the "Eat More Turkey" program attracted representatives of foreign poultry producing countries to America to attend National Turkey Federation annual conventions and to visit American turkey farms, hatcheries, feed mills, and processing plants. The British Turkey Federation was particularly active in seeking such information. As a result I received through National Turkey Federation an invitation to explain and demonstrate American turkey promotion methods at the annual convention of the British Turkey Federation in February, 1962. The federation meetings were to be held in Eastbourne on the southern coast of England.

The weather reports from England at the time I left home predicted "the worst winter of the century." I took my heaviest winter clothing including an overcoat, extra heavy underwear, rubbers, a woolen scarf, a sweater and wool-lined gloves. By the time I reached England the weather had turned so mild that I put that excess baggage in a bundle and parcel posted it back home.

The meetings were held in a very old hotel. My room was old-fashioned with extremely high ceilings, but the service and the appointments were excellent. Most of the delegates were prosperous land and livestock owners, members of a virtually closed society which only people of influence and large land holdings could get in. Consequently, turkey sales and prices were practically controlled with costs to consumers around \$1.00 a pound compared with about half that price in the States.

In my talk, I naively asked my audience why I, a representative of the American Turkey Industry whose products could not be imported into England, would travel 10,000 miles to tell our British cousins the American turkey story and I partially answered my own question by repeating a conversation I had had recently with a representative of a large American steel company which had been asked to send their experts around the globe to teach foreign competitors how to make better and cheaper steel products only to have some of them come back to the United States to compete against American products. After a thoughtful pause, the American steelman answered:

"Sometimes I wonder myself. But I think there is a good answer. American business leaders believe that all countries of the free world must work hand in hand to demonstrate that our way of life is the best way, and



somewhere, somehow everything that contributes to this goal is good for every man who lives in the free world. Making more and better steel is part of the answer."

And I added,

"Producing more and better meat at an economical price is also contributing to our free world economy."

In my formal presentation I pointed out that more had happened to turkeys in the previous seventeen years (the period in which I had been associated with the turkey industry) than in all previous years since the wild turkey was discovered by our British-born forefathers as they stepped off the Mayflower. I also recalled that first American Thanksgiving Day in 1621 and how, since then, the turkey had become the American symbol of gratitude for blessings of a plentiful harvest.

Following are a few additional quotes from my speech:

"By 1890 our turkey population had reached more than ten million birds but by 1920 production had dropped back to only three million, our low point in production. Some twenty years later, spurred by the war, the turkey production had reached a total of thirty-five million birds most of which had been committed to our Armed Forces. Then came the end of hostilities and the cancellation of government turkey contracts and the crises of 1945. That was the year when the U.S. Turkey Federation's "Eat More Turkey" campaign was born. In 1961, some

seven years later, the United States produced one hundred and seven million birds, or more than a billion and a half pounds for an average of eight pounds per capita.

"The development of the present broad-breasted bronze turkey which has been upgraded from the foundation stock of the skinny wild bird of 1620 was an achievement of great importance to turkey growers at home and abroad, and so also the development of the small American Beltsville turkey of six to eight pounds. As a result of these and other breeding, processing and marketing achievements, today turkey is now sold in every type of food store in America and in every style and size of lunch counter, restaurant, hotel, hospital, school lunch room and industrial cafeteria. And it is sometimes jokingly called the "jail bird" because it is also served in prisons where wholesome and cheap meat is required. One American restaurant chain organization, perhaps the largest in the world, last year served eight million turkey dinners to their patrons, and in an American, nationwide sandwich popularity poll which was conducted recently by the Wheat Flour Institute of America, eight of the top twenty most popular sandwiches were made of turkey or turkey in combination with other meats. Another poll conducted by the U.S. Army Quartermaster Corps showed that roast turkey is a prime favorite of servicemen over



every other meat entree, even more popular than roast beef.

"And backing up such popularity is something even more basic than American tastes, it is the fact that the American turkey has an in-bred efficiency factor which makes it unsurpassed on a feed-to-gain conversion basis. Tests by one of America's leading universities show that turkey meat can be produced more efficiently than any other meat on the American market. It also has an inherent high-yield factor, an important word in food service businesses where high percentages of edible meat to total carcass weight is so important.

"Other advantages turkeys possess, as only recently discovered is the special appeal which low fat food show to figure-conscious girls who want that new-style American svelte shape.

And finally I pointed out, that to all those superior claims, turkey meat also holds other highest honors. We can now add these:

"According to recent Cornell University research studies, of all edible meat, turkey is the lowest both in cholesterol and in cholesterol-producing factors; also that the fat content already rated as low is also classified as soft, the kind which does not increase the cholesterol level in the human blood stream like the other kind of cholesterol which is believed to promote hardening of the arteries."

One of the aims of the American "Eat More Turkey" program, as I also pointed out to my British audience, was to disseminate widely those facts to the American public and those were some of the things which had so rapidly increased the consumption of turkeys in America, but another real but less obvious reason was that turkey consumption was fast becoming a convenience food.

In the past when housewives had to do the job of defeathering, decapitating, drawing the entrails, and to coin a pun "defeeting" the holiday bird, it was being served only once or twice a year. But beginning about 1950 the fully eviscerated or "oven-ready" bird, all ready to stuff and pop into the oven, accounts for 90 percent of the entire American crop.

A next improvement, as I told my British audience, was the use of a plastic container--to give eye appeal to the finished product and to keep it completely sanitary until ready to stuff and roast. And at that point I confessed that the expenses for my British visit were being paid by the Cryovac Corporation, a principal producer of plastic food containers both in America and abroad.

I told my audience the story of the origin of that unique American institution, the "TV Turkey Dinner." An invitation to meet the needs of persons who wanted to eat their meals from their laps while staring at the TV tube and I related how I assisted, although indirectly, in creating that new American fast food specialty.

At the end of my talk, I served samples of some of the products which I had brought with me though explaining that none



of these products were not eligible for import in Great Britain under their highly restrictive import regulations because at that time U.S. turkeys were being falsely blamed by the British Government of being carriers of Newcastle's Disease, although virtually everyone knew it was not fear of "Newcastle" but of competition to British turkey growers from the United States and other foreign areas which accounted for the import ban.

During the next several days as I was taken to visit several English turkey farms, I learned more of the "Newcastle" story. On several of the largest turkey farms which I visited there was not a single live turkey to be found. They had all been exterminated on government orders. But I did see several huge earth-covered mounds of dead turkeys--the remains of an entire flock. If a single bird were to be found with symptoms of "Newcastles" disease the entire flock must be exterminated although there was not a single American turkey in all of Great Britain to take the blame. And would that make our English turkey cousins sad? Not at all, for, by British law and regulations every destroyed bird had automatically been "purchased" by the government at its full market price which was in affect, another form of the British "dole."

Before concluding my talk, I couldn't refrain from giving my British audience a little lecture on the advantages of the American free enterprise system over Britain's socialist system--a reference which those affluent British turkey growers seemed pleased to hear.

After my return from England, I continued to remain involved indirectly with turkeys, but turned control over to others.



Things continued to go well for turkey growers and the Evans Agency in the next several years. Production and consumption figures were both up, and turkey prices rose slightly, enabling good growers to make a fair profit. The result was that the NTF Executive Committee at its annual meeting at Kansas City in February, 1964, approved a budget of \$248,618, the largest in the history of the turkey federation; the funds to be divided between the Evans Agency, Poultry & Egg National Board with continuing minor support of the Poultry Industry's International Trade Development Board and other development purposes. The Evans portion of that budget was based on continued advertising in twenty-five grocery and meat, restaurant and hotel, hospital and home economics trade and professional magazines, also increased cooperative advertising for turkey and related products, with costs and benefits fairly. Among the many "cooperators" of the previous year were:

Campbell Soups, Tabasco, Accent International, Kraft Foods, Pepperidge Farms, Processed Apples Institute, Prune Advisory Board, Frozen Potatoes Council, Cling Peach Advisory Board, Louisiana Yam Association, Frozen Peas Council, Bakers Institute, Wheat Flour Institute, Quality Bakers of America, American Dairy Association, Ocean Spray Cranberries, Wonder Bread, National Meat and Livestock Board, Anheuser-Busch, Champagnes of France, Wine Institute, Dole Pineapple, Pacific Coast Canned Pear Association, Florida Celery Committee, Real Lemon, Evaporated Milk Association, John Oster Company (Osterizer), Open Pit Barbecue Sauce, California Foods Research Institute, Reynolds Aluminum, Alcoa Aluminum, Kaiser Aluminum, Kitchen Bouquet, Lawry's, National Restaurant



Association, Cryovac Company, Dobeckmun Company, International Grocers Alliance, National Association of Retail Grocers, National Association of Food Chains, Supermarket Institute, Topco Associates, Jewel Tea Company, Safeway Stores, Kroger Stores, Red & White Stores, Associated Grocers, S.H. Kress & Company, W.T. Grant Company, Woolworth's, Rhead Drugs.

For 1964 it was anticipated that the number of turkeys which would be marketed through regular channels of trade would be 7% greater than the year previous with early season prices expected to be slightly lower but to balance out for the entire year. That kept the Evans Agency in a very strong position.

Just what happened during that year to make the industry abandon its direct, sensationally effective turkey advertising is difficult to understand. But 1964 was the last year for such a program with "Eat More Turkey" paid trade magazine advertising being the main base. It also marked the beginning of a period in which the increase of per capita consumption of turkeys began to slow down while per capita consumption of most other meats increased disproportionately. Today, fifteen years later, as I record these facts per capita consumption of turkey is only ten pounds compared with beef at 98.9 pounds, pork at 54.5 pounds and chicken at 43.3 pounds. Moreover, the comparative gains in turkey prices to the consumer have lagged further behind most other meats.

Perhaps it is unfair to judge at this late date why the turkey industry leaders almost abandoned what had been one of the most successful promotion campaigns ever to be developed, especially since so many new specialty turkey further processed products have been developed and that they could hardly be ex-



pected to gain broad consumer acceptance without continued strong advertising support.

But whatever the reason, 1965 saw a major change in the industry's promotional methods--but, fortunately not its abandonment.

From then on till the present--1979--there has been no direct media advertising. Has this been a mistake? It would do no good at this late date to debate the issue. Perhaps the biggest mistake, if I may so call it, has been to reduce the size of the EMT budget in terms of its current purchasing power. For example, the services and media space and collateral materials which we could purchase with the quarter of a million dollar budget which was approved for 1964 would take three or four times that amount to do the same kind of a job today, not compensating for the increase in consumer population. Instead, during many recent years our budget has been about half the 1964 dollar amount.

This is not to discount the efforts which have been made by NTF staffers and its public relations firm who have done a remarkably effective job with the limited funds available to them and perhaps, some of the technics now being employed to promote year round turkey consumption are more effective than some early methods and should continue to be employed. But direct advertising in trade and professional magazines could again fill a much needed vacuum in today's program if funds were available.

Regardless, we have done the best we could, always hoping that next year or the next, we could resume direct media advertising along with the other things we were doing so well.

During this "holding" period, the account has been well served by Clay Robinson, then Dick Marshall until he was given



a leave of absence to perform foreign service for his church during a three year period. Since then, the account has again been served by an Evans, my son, Wayne, who has served it well. While I have been a semi-retired observer but always anxious and available to assist, three years ago when Wayne asked me to help him define some of the long term results of our efforts, we came up with these conclusions:

1. In the thirty years we have served the industry, the marketing season for turkeys has been extended from once-a-year holiday market to a year-round market.
2. Turkeys have become a year-round menu offering in most American hotels and restaurants.
3. The production and sale of turkey meat in some "further processed" form has been initiated and successfully promoted in many markets of the country.
4. The saleability and widespread use of "further processed" turkey meat as a convenient food, both for institutional and home use, has been fully demonstrated.
5. The wide use of turkey meat as a major ingredient in consumer and institutional packaged, canned and branded food product had been successfully encouraged and promoted.
6. Research and promotion to establish turkey as an economical and acceptable food which is high in protein, low in fat and rich in vitamins and other beneficial dietary trace elements has been established.
7. Educating food editors and news media (newspapers, magazines, television, radio) on turkey's superior qualities and better ways to cook it had been accomplished.

8. Initiating and organizing major turkey marketing promotions in thousands of food stores of the nation has been fully demonstrated.

9. Encouraging growers and processors to prepare and package their turkey products in a more attractive, eye-appealing form has been achieved.

As a result of these and scores of other innovations and promotions, turkey consumption has increased from 2.7 pounds per capita and 375,000,000 pounds per year, in 1944, the year before the first "Eat More Turkey" campaign was started, to its nearly 10 pounds per capita for a total of more than two billion pounds per year now.

And yet there is much more to be done before our goals have been fully achieved. All in all I feel proud of our long, innovative and productive service to the American turkey industry.

But one should never be fully satisfied with results in any period of time. So we ask ourselves, how could we have done it better and what needs doing now that we have not accomplished fully in the past?

We talked that over too, Wayne and I, and here are some unfinished jobs--some goals we have not fully reached:

1. We have yet to put together a unified generic promotional program giving appropriate emphasis to consumers, grocers, and the food service industry all at the same time.



2. The muscle (budgets) available to promote the generic products of the turkey industry have never made it possible to compete against other meat products -- beef, lamb, pork, etc.

3. Distribution of many new turkey products is still spotty, making effective promotion difficult.

But we are still hoping and will continue to do our best with the money and authorizations we have. On balance, turkey promotion, in one form or another, has been for fifty years, and still is, one of our most interesting and most honored promotional accounts.

